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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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Nemo in ſeſe tentat deſcendere, nemo.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I BEG your advice and aſſiſtance to enable me to get rid of one of the moſt impertinent companions that ever exiſted. I have tried every art and contrivance in my power to free myſelf from his odious converſation; the creature will preſs upon my retirement, and force himſelf upon me in ſpite of my teeth; though the *tête a tête* is always the moſt ſhocking and unmannerly you can poſſibly conceive. The thing is always meddling in my affairs in a manner to be quite intolerable; always ſetting them in ſuch a light, as cannot fail to put me out of humour; and teazing me with reflect-

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ions that make me weary of my life. I am ſure I could more eaſily bear the ſpiteful tongues of twenty witty females at a maſquerade, than the impertinence of this animal for a quarter of an hour; and with concern I find, that the more pains I take to free myſelf from him, the more troubleſome he grows.

Nor do I complain only for my own ſake, but for the ſakes of almoſt the whole circle of my acquaintance, as well female as male, who in general are peſtered in a moſt unreaſonable manner by this ſaucy intruder, whom all are forced to admit, though ſo few care for his company, and againſt whoſe preſumption no rank or dignity, no quality or profeſſion, can defend them. He will force himſelf into the cloſet, hover about the bed, and penetrate through the thickeſt darkneſs into the deepeſt receſs; will travel with us by ſea and land, and follow the wretch into baniſhment. In vain does the ſtateſman hug himſelf in the ſucceſs of his unjuſt ſchemes, or exult in the gratification of his ambition or revenge; unawed by his power, this haughty companion will check his career of tranſport, by placing before his eyes the inſtability of his ſituation, and the conſequences of his actions. In vain does the flirt or coxcomb, when alone, endeavour to recollect with pleaſure the *badinage* of the day; the creature will diſturb their moſt delightful reveries, and by the magic of his intervention, convert all the imaginary *agrêments* into vanity, folly, and loſt time. You cannot wonder then that ſo many avoid and fly him, and that the pannic ſpread by him ſhould extend itſelf far and wide; nor can you be much amazed when I aſſure you, that it is no uncommon thing to ſee men of ſenſe and courage fly from him without reaſon, and take refuge in thoſe polite reſorts, where diſſipation, riot and luxury,

luxury, ſecure them from his viſits, which they only decline becauſe it is unfaſhionable to converſe with him. It is ſurpriſing what pains are continually taken, what contrivances have been uſed to get rid of this univerſal phantom. Some flatter him, ſome bully him, and ſome endeavour to impoſe upon him; but he never fails to detect their frauds, and to reſent them with ſeverity.

The beaus and fine gentlemen ſeem to revere and adore him, pouring forth libations of ſweet water, and offering him the incenſe of perfumes; cloathing him in dreſſes, elegant and expenſive as thoſe of our lady of Loretto, practiſing every art of heathen or popiſh idolatry, even torturing themſelves for his ſake; but all with no manner of ſucceſs; for the brute in return is as unſociable and diſagreeable to the pretty creatures, as the moſt ſavage ſquire, or the moſt formal pedant; ſo that ſpite of their pretences, they are obliged to fly, as a plague, from what they appear moſt to admire. I cannot here omit a whimſical circumſtance in this paradoxical character, that moſt people are reproached with loving him with the greateſt partiality and fondneſs, and are greatly delighted to hear him praiſed, yet very few ſeek to come to the knowledge of him, or cultivate his acquaintance; nay, the greater part try all poſſible means to avoid encountering him.

Our modern philoſophers pretend by their ſyſtems to have ſilenced him, and by that means to have prevented his being troubleſome to them or their acquaintance; but how fallacious theſe pretences are, is plain from their avoiding all opportunities of being alone with him, and the confuſion they expreſs whenever by unavoidable neceſſity they are forced to it. Others, as he is a known enemy to the modern elegant tables, have exerted all the

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arts of the kitchen againſt him, lengthening the feaſt till midnight to keep him off; but, like the reckoning, he appears when the banquet is over, reproaching the bounteous hoſt with his profuſion, and the pampered gueſt with his wanton ſatiety: nay, ſo galling are his reprehenſions, and ſo troubleſome his intruſion, that there have not been wanting inſtances, even in high life, of thoſe, who not being able to keep him off otherways, have called into their relief the halter, dagger and piſtol, and fairly removed themſelves into another world to get rid of him; though certain queer fellows pretend that they are bit, and that he has followed them even thither.

The fair ſex, though generally favourable to the impertinent, are ſo rudely attacked by this inſolent intruder, that to keep him off, they have been obliged to call in to their aſſiſtance the relief of routs, balls, aſſemblies, operas, gardens and cards; and all little enough for their protection. He might indeed pretend to ſome ſhare of their favour, as, like themſelves, he is a ſevere cenſurer of his acquaintance; but there is this difference in their management, that the ladies are generally fondeſt of fixing their cenſure on the innocent, and their adverſary is a judge that condemns none but the guilty. The Buck and the Sot ſeem to be leaſt affected by his importunity; as the one, from his natural inſenſibility, can attend to nothing, and the other is always aſleep.

In the city, thoſe of the middling rank converſe with him pretty familiarly; and the rich, to whom he might on ſome occaſions prove troubleſome, have a charm to keep him off. They place a number of baggs, full of pieces of a particular metal, cloſe together; or in their ſtead, ſome bits of paper inſcribed with certain cabaliſtical characters, which, with a Midas-like touch, they can tranſ-

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mute into gold. By the help of this charm, though they do not entirely get rid of him, they become quite inſenſible to every thing he can ſuggeſt. But as theſe materials are not always at hand, or are applied to other uſes by the politer part of mankind, this magic is not properly underſtood or practiced at the other end of the town; though it is ſaid that ſome particular perſons there had tried it with a proper effect.

NOTWITHSTANDING all I have advanced of this impertinent viſitor, I cannot help owning that ſome have attempted to inſinuate a better opinon of him. A certain old gentleman, for recommending his acquaintance, got the title of a wiſe man; a name at preſent but of ſmall conſideration; and I am told that there never were but ſeven that were allowed that title. There are indeed ſome few perſons of high rank of both ſexes, that do vouchſafe to commune with him; but they are ſuch ſort of folks, as are hardly fit to converſe with any but one another; and very happily, one is ſeldom peſtered with them at places of polite aſſociation; ſcarce a man among them knowing how to make a bett, to drink his third bottle, or that has ſpirit to aſpire at the reputation of a *bonne fortune*. The ladies of this claſs are alſo ſo unfit for the converſation of the world, that not one in ten of them knows how to play a rubber at whiſt, or dares to ſet down to a party at bragg.

I HAVE now, ſir, laid my complaints before you, and beg your advice how to get clear of my perplexity. My troubleſome companion is, no doubt, too well known to you to require the inſertion of his name; but as ſome of your readers (particularly females) may be ſubject to the frailty of forgetting their moſt intimate acquaintance,